

# **DHS Matters!**

Michigan Department of Human Services ● Lansing, Michigan ● November 14, 2007 Produced by DHS Office of Communications, Suite 1510, Grand Tower, Lansing Submit stories by e-mail to <a href="mailto:DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov">DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov</a>

# DHS administrator receives 2007 special recognition award Stephanie Miller of Wayne DHS cited as outstanding child advocate

From Kelly D. Small Vista Maria, Dearborn Ksmall@vistamaria.org

DEARBORN HEIGHTS—Vista Maria, a community that transforms the lives of children who have faced abuse, neglect and other challenges, awarded the Vista Maria 2007
Outstanding Child Advocate Award to **Stephanie Miller**, interim director of Child and Family Services for Wayne County DHS. The awards ceremony was held in conjunction with Vista Maria's annual board meeting Oct. 26 in Dearborn.

"Ms. Miller has been an advocate of the Intensive Supportive Foster Care Program since Vista Maria and The Guidance Center first proposed the collaborative concept," said Cameron D. Hosner, president and CEO of Vista Maria. "Vista Maria is committed to rebuilding lives and healing families for this generation and those to come."



Stephanie Miller, center, was awarded the outstanding child advocate award by Vista Maria. She appears with Vista Maria officials: (from left) Michigan Supreme Court Justice and board chair Robert Young Jr., president and CEO Cameron Hosner, and chief operating officer Patricia Lynett.

Photo courtesy Vista Maria

Miller joined four other community volunteers honored by Vista Maria. They were Angela Aufdemberge of Entertainment Publications for outstanding board leadership, Rock Financial for outstanding corporate partner, Nikole Schmith for outstanding mentor, and Brenda and Daniel Blue for outstanding foster parents. In addition, staff awards were given for longevity and team dedication. The honorees were recognized for outstanding dedication to the agency over the past year. More than 140 community supporters, volunteers, board and advisors and family members attended the event.

Founded in 1883 by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Vista Maria is Michigan's largest non-profit residential and community-based treatment agency for abused and neglected girls. The agency serves girls ages 11-17 from across Michigan with treatment for mental health, substance abuse, trauma recovery, and other psychosocial issues. Gender-responsive treatment programs introduce, model and reinforce strong, positive messages about being female. The agency's

mission is to transition high-risk girls into productive, healthy adulthood through a comprehensive continuum of care in their home communities when possible.

Vista Maria's Intensive Supportive Foster Care Program is a reunification and community reintegration program for children ages 6-17 that are severely emotionally disturbed. The program places them with highly trained therapeutic foster families.

### Click to read..

| Local office stories | .2 |
|----------------------|----|
|                      |    |

Halloween at DHS......3

Your letters.....4

### Ladies of Harley labor of love helps abused & neglected kids

From Karen Urquhart
DHS Macomb County, Clinton Township
UrquhartK@michigan.gov

When they heard about our Children's Duffel Bag Program needing contributions, the Ladies of Harley (LOH) from Wolverine HOG chapter 1332 felt compelled to help. The Duffel Bag Program provides every child that is removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect with a backpack filled with a variety of essential and cozy items. The children know the backpack and its contents are theirs to keep, helping them find comfort during this very uncertain time in their life. Macomb County DHS distributes on average 45 duffel bags per month to children entering foster care.

The Ladies of Harley not only found a unique way to stock our shelves, but had a lot of fun doing it! They began by putting out a call to the biker community for donations of t-shirts. They received a huge response to this by gathering a variety of



Ladies of Harley from Wolverine chapter 1332.

motorcycle-themed t-shirts representing areas from all over the country. From these t-shirts, two of their talented members crafted a beautiful quilt.



The quilt and its winner.

The quilt was displayed at various HOG chapter events and generated enthusiasm wherever it went. LOH members worked many of these events selling tickets for a chance to win this one of a kind creation. In total, they raised \$1,160 from their efforts. Outfitted in their leathers, pins and patches, the ladies went to a local shopping center and purchased the items needed for the duffel bags.

"We have a big heart when it comes to children in need," said Ladies of Harley officer Roxy Gronkiewicz, who is rightly very proud of her group. "We pulled up our bootstraps and, with the help of the Wolverine chapter, accomplished what we set out to do — collect for the kids. It was great to help children in our own community."

## Local crisis brings out best of Kalamazoo staff

From Ruth Yoshikawa Kalamazoo DHS, Kalamazoo YoskikawaR@michigan.gov

The Loaves and Fishes agency in Kalamazoo County supports people in times of crisis. During August 2007 several thousand residents in Kalamazoo were without power due to severe storms that went through the area. The outages lasted up to four days.

With the loss of power came a loss of food. To help support this need for food, the community called on Loaves and Fishes. This unexpected crisis greatly reduced their supply of food items.

To help replenish their store of food, the Kalamazoo County Department of Human Services held a week long Casual for a Cause event. During this week, employees gave a monetary donation along with nonperishable food items while dressing casually. Altogether, we collected more than \$800 along with several bags of food items that we donated for Loaves and Fishes. Thanks DHS staff for your generosity!



Sarah Sorter and son Robert with the Large Randy Rooster (volunteer Lorraine Katschor).

Monroe's pumpkin giveaway

From Polly Fredericks
Monroe County DHS, Monroe

FredericksP@michigan.gov

Monroe County DHS had its annual **Pumpkin Give Away** for local children Oct. 29. CPS worker Lisa
Millyard coordinated this event with a local farmer
who donated a truck load of small pumpkins every year
for the event. Monroe had a paid casual day to support
this event. There were donuts for everyone who came
and treat bags filled with candy and informative safety
materials for the children and their families. The kids
loved it! *Most of them anyway;* a couple of them hid.



The Cook family with that rooster and pinkhaired witch Lisa Millyard, a CPS specialist that organized the event.



Inset: Some bureau employees' children and grandson arrived for

- From DeAnna Clark

treat or treat.

Date: Nov. 5

To: Louise Wing, Acting Director

**DHS Income Support Programs, Lansing** 

Subj: Michelle Best

This note is to let you know that I was very impressed by the very helpful and friendly nature of Michelle Best on some questions that I had regarding Medicaid.

#### Mohammad Yusaf, P.E.

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Lansing

■ Michelle Best is manager of Medical Assistance Programs.

Date: Nov. 5

To: DHS Matters! readers

Subj: Correction

A story about the Shawono Center in the Nov. 1 issue said the center was licensed for males and females ages 12-20. This is incorrect. The center is licensed to serve only males.

Date: Nov. 1 To: DHS Matters!

Subj: Serve, service, serviced

(I) loved the article by Susan Bailey-Carman in the (Nov. 1) newsletter. I had been taught that serviced meant: (1) fixing an inanimate object ("I had my car serviced by the mechanic") or 2) breeding a living creature ("We had our purebred mare serviced.") Therefore, I really wince when someone talks about DHS staff servicing our clients.

**Karen Sue Foster** 

Sanilac DHS, Sandusky

Date: Oct. 24 To: DHS-Net

Subj: DHS Customer Service Center

From all of the staff of Section 8, at the Lansing Housing Commission, we would like to compliment your customer service staff. They are always so friendly and helpful when we call and make our jobs so much easier! Thanks a bunch to the following lovely ladies that we talk to on a daily basis. Jan Price, Anne Hutton, Haniyyah Qawwee, and a special thanks to Colleen Binns, she is the best! Also thank you to all of the ladies who complete so many of our forms for us, Maria Torres, Linda Walker and everyone else that I might have missed! You are all spectacular!" Lisa (Krall), Linda, Erica, Lynnette, and Angie

Section 8 Assistants

Lansing Housing Commission, Lansing

■ Lisa Krall sent this notice to DHS-Net via Internet email. "You are more than welcome to use my compliments in your newsletter," she said. "The five of us are...employed by HUD which is a federally funded subsidized housing program. Much of our job function is to verify income for our clients when doing annual exams and income changes. We rely greatly on the DHS customer service team to help us with verifying such things as food stamps and cash grants. They are absolutely wonderful!"

Date: Oct. 10

To: Kay Andrzejak, District Manager

Wayne County Adult Medical Services, Redford

Subj: Beverly Mathews

On Oct. 5 I told Beverly Mathews about a crisis I was involved in. Mrs. Mathews knows me from the past. She listened to my detail and my concern and my urgency. She took the proper actions to help me out. I have thanked Mrs. Mathews as much as I can for her kindness, her courtesy, her professional attitude, and for dealing with me to help me out. I am speech-impaired. Please tell Mrs. Mathews how grateful and happy I am that she helped me as she did. I was in a crisis situation, called Mrs. Mathews (and) she showed me why she is a supervisor. She takes care of business, does what she has to, and keeps people safe, healthy (and) alive. Please thank her for her wonderful action. She went beyond the call of duty to make sure I'm OK. My phone goes to my automated system because I am handicapped and can't pick up the phone when it rings. Please thank Beverly Mathews for all she's doing. She definitely is a special person to me.

**Robert Schorr** 

Wayne County

■ Beverly Mathews is an adult services manager in Wayne County. Robert Schorr left this message by voice mail. He resides in Wayne County and requested his hometown be confidential.

Your letters, intercepted and otherwise

DHS Matters! is a product of Michigan's Department of Human Services
Ismael Ahmed, Director ● Karen Stock, Director, Office of Communications
Larry VanDeSande, editor ● Submit stories by e-mail to: DHS-Newsletter@michigan.gov